

# Stop Consonants

/p/ /b/ /t/ /d/ /k/ /g/

A PPT prepared by Luis Salazar



# P

## Possible Pronunciation Problems

This consonant is familiar to speakers of most languages. However, [p] is much more explosive in English than it is in other languages. When speaking English, [p] at the beginning of words must be produced with strong aspiration or it might sound like [b].

**EXAMPLES** If you forget to aspirate [p]: **pear** will sound like **bear**.  
**pat** will sound like **bat**.

When *p* follows *s* (as in *spot*, *spend*, *spy*), it is NOT aspirated. Practice saying [p] by loosely holding a tissue in front of your lips. If you aspirate [p] correctly, releasing a puff of air, the tissue will flutter.

**So puff, puff, puff, and you'll pronounce a perfect [p]!**



### [p] At the Beginning of Words

pen	pay	pain
put	pig	past
pet	pot	person

### [p] In the Middle of Words

open	happy	supper
apart	pepper	airport
apple	paper	people

### [p] At the End of Words

top	map	pipe
cap	stop	jump
lip	soap	camp



# B

## Possible Pronunciation Problems

1. Although the consonant [b] is a simple sound to pronounce, you may confuse it with the sound [v].

**EXAMPLE** If you say [v] instead of [b]: **boat** will sound like **vote**.

2. When [b] is the last sound in a word, many speakers forget to make their vocal cords vibrate. This will make [b] sound like [p] and confuse your listeners.

**EXAMPLES** If you say [p] instead of [b]: **robe** will sound like **rope**.  
**cab** will sound like **cap**.

The consonant [b] will be easy to say if you make your vocal cords vibrate and firmly press your lips together.

**Be sure to say [b] with a boom and you'll be at your best!**



### [b] At the Beginning of Words

be	best	boat
but	bone	begin
bat	bank	borrow
back		

### [b] In the Middle of Words

obey	rubber	label
baby	lobby	ribbon
table	cabin	neighbor
habit		

### [b] At the End of Words

cab	rib	crib
cub	rob	bulb
rub	knob	robe
tub		





# T

## Possible Pronunciation Problems

The consonant [t] is a common sound and, for many learners, it does not cause much difficulty. When pronouncing [t], your tongue tip should touch the upper gum ridge, NOT the back of your upper front teeth. [t] must be said with strong aspiration and a puff of air or it might sound like [d]. Some speakers tend to say [ts] instead of [t] before [u] or [tʃ] in place of [t] before [i] and [ɪ].

- EXAMPLES**
- If you say [d] instead of [t]: **two** will sound like **do**.
  - If you say [ts] instead of [t]: **tune** will sound like **tsune**.
  - If you say [tʃ] instead of [t]: **tease** will sound like **cheese**.

Practice saying [t] while loosely holding a tissue in front of your mouth. If you aspirate [t] correctly and say it with a puff of air, your tissue will flutter.

**So—be sure to practice all the time; you'll make a terrific [t].**



### [t] At the Beginning of Words

to      talk      time  
ten      tell      table  
try      tree      terrible  
top

### [t] In the Middle of Words

until      attend      between  
after      return      contain  
empty      winter      printing  
wanted

### [t] At the End of Words

it      went      state  
but      late      fruit  
ate      light      apart  
boat

- Tapped /t/ (in between vowels)

city      water  
pretty      writing  
better      sitting  
notice      pattern  
butter      cutting



## D

## Possible Pronunciation Problems

1. The sound [d] should be produced with the tongue tip touching the upper gum ridge. It should NOT touch the back of your upper front teeth or be placed between your teeth.

## EXAMPLES

If you say [ð] instead of [d]:

**ladder** will sound like **lather**.

**breeding** will sound like **breathing**.

2. When [d] is the last sound in a word, many speakers forget to make their vocal cords vibrate. This will make [d] sound like a [t] and confuse your listeners.

## EXAMPLES

If you say [t] instead of [d]:

**card** will sound like **cart**.

**bed** will sound like **bet**.

Press your tongue tip against the gum ridge behind your upper front teeth and add voicing when you pronounce [d].

**Don't forget to practice [d] every day!**





### [d] At the Beginning of Words

do	door	dozen
dog	dime	doctor
day	down	different
desk		

### [d] In the Middle of Words

body	older	pudding
soda	order	Sunday
under	window	medicine
today		

### [d] At the End of Words

bad	food	bread
did	card	build
end	cold	would/wood
said		



# K

## Possible Pronunciation Problems

[k] is an easy consonant for you to say. Just remember that [k] is very explosive in English. When it begins a word, it must be said with strong aspiration and a puff of air. When *k* follows *s* (as in *sky*, *skin*, *skate*), however, it is NOT aspirated with a puff of air.

**Keep practicing. You can say [k] OK!**



### [k] At the Beginning of Words

can	come
car	quick
key	could
cold	correct
keep	

### [k] In the Middle of Words

cookie	walking
become	because
record	mechanic
jacket	backward
inquire	

### [k] At the End of Words

like	make
took	clock
week	speak
sick	black
work	

### [k] Spelled

<i>k</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>qu</i> ([kw])	<i>x</i> ([ks])
kite	coat	quit	six
kill	cone	quick	box
lake	acre	quiet	wax
keep	class	quote	exit
bake	crime	square	mixture



# G

## Possible Pronunciation Problems

[g] should be an easy consonant for you to say. However, when [g] is the last sound in a word, you might forget to add voicing or substitute [k] by mistake. This will change the meaning of your words.

**EXAMPLES** If you say [k] instead of [g]: **bag** will sound like **back**.

If you say [ŋ] instead of [g]: **rug** will sound like **rung**.

Always make your vocal cords vibrate for [g] at the end of words. Let your [g] GO with an explosion.

**Your [g] has got to be good!**



### [g] At the Beginning of Words

go	guess
get	green
girl	glass
gone	gather
great	

### [g] In the Middle of Words

cigar	bigger
agree	hungry
begin	beggar
anger	cigarette
forget	

### [g] At the End of Words

beg	dog
pig	egg
bag	drug
rug	flag
log	

### [g] Spelled

<i>g</i>		<i>x</i> ([gz])	
green	beggar	exact	exhibit
glass	egg	exert	example
hungry	drug	exam	exist





# Reference

- Adapted from:

Dale, P., & Poms, L. (2005) English Pronunciation Made Simple. New York: Longman.

